



## December 2009 Newsletter



PHOTO BY JEANNE FRIEDMANN

### Obama Visits Ghana On Three-Country Tour

President Barack Obama's visit to Ghana on July 10 and 11 marked his first trip to sub-Saharan Africa as President of the United States. This trip had special significance for Obama, whose own father was Kenyan.

The President arrived at Kotoka International Airport in Accra at 9:00 PM on Friday night, greeted by a small delegation led by the recently elected President of Ghana John Evans Atta Mills and Mills' wife, Ernestina Naadu Mills.

On Saturday, President Obama began his day with breakfast and bilateral talks with President Mills at Osu Castle. From there, he continued with the First Lady to La General Hospital, where he met with pregnant women, highlighting the importance of prenatal care and the issue of infant mortality in Africa.

Arguably the most significant event of Obama's visit was the speech that he gave to the Ghanaian Parliament at the Accra International Conference Center. The speech was directed at the African continent as a whole, with a basic message of the importance of democracy, development, and the

"simple premise that Africa's future is up to Africans." The speech centered around four points: democracy, opportunity, health, and conflict resolution.

In an interview given to AllAfrica.com in advance of his visit, President Obama was asked why he had chosen Ghana as the one African country in his tour.

"By travelling to Ghana," he responded, "we hope to highlight the effective governance that they have in place." Ghana has shown its commitment to democracy not just in holding peaceful elections in December 2008, but also in the peaceful transition of power that followed. This was the second time in Ghana that the defeat of the incumbent party resulted in a peaceful transition of power.

In his speech to Ghana's parliament, Obama reinforced this idea when he spoke of the need for a strong civil society. "This is about more than just holding elections," he said. "It's also about what happens between elections." He cited the young people across Africa who stand up against patronage and participate in the political process as an example of strong civil society.

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President Obama also spoke of Africa as a continent with great potential for investment opportunities. Reiterating his support for democracy, he suggested that “Where there is good governance, we can broaden prosperity through public-private partnerships.” Referencing the recent oil discovery in Ghana, Obama spoke of the importance of investing oil revenue in human capital and infrastructure. He also warned against dependence on commodities and called for economic diversification.

While highlighting the progress that has been made in areas such as HIV/AIDS, President Obama

*“I promise you this: if you seize this opportunity, if you take responsibility for your future, America will be with you every step of the way as a partner and as a friend.”*

*- Barack Obama*

said that too many people are still dying from diseases that shouldn’t kill them, such as malaria and tuberculosis. He made a note of the fact that the

United States had committed \$63 billion to strengthen health services and improve health outcomes. With that money, he said, we “will carry

forward the fight against HIV/AIDS...pursue the goal of ending deaths from malaria and tuberculosis, and we will work to eradicate polio.”

Obama’s speech also noted another problem that continues to plague the continent.

“For far too many Africans, conflict is a part of life,” he said. He continued by saying that the diversity of Africa

should be a source of strength and not divisiveness. Lastly, the President remarked on the newly established United States Africa Command (AFRICOM). Obama stated that AFRICOM is “Focused not on establishing a foothold in the continent, but on confronting these common challenges to advance the security of America, Africa, and the world.”

At his departure, President Obama made a short public speech to crowds that included Ghanaians and US Embassy Staff including USAID employees and Peace Corps volunteers. He spoke of the strong relationship between the United States and Ghana, and their shared ideals which, he stressed, have been “Forged in the struggles for independence that have made our countries who they are.” President Obama concluded with a message to the young people of Africa: “I promise you this: If you seize this opportunity, if you take responsibility for your future, America will be with you every step of the way as a partner and as a friend.”



*US President Barack Obama and Ghanaian President John Atta Mills at Kotoka Airport*

PHOTO BY DAVID CZARNECKI

## The Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative (GHFSI)

On June 30, 2008, in the face of then rising food prices and unrest in the developing world, President Bush signed an appropriations act to provide \$1.64 billion to confront the global food security crisis. The money was to be used to implement a food security program that included immediate humanitarian response, and the expansion of staple food production.



*A sample seed multiplication plot of millet in the Kano State of Northern Nigeria, supported by the West African Seed Alliance (WASA). Access to quality seeds and planting material of improved varieties is a critical link to obtaining high yields.*

The Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative is USAID's response to the President's call for assistance. Of the money appropriated, USAID West Africa received \$25 million, and developed a strategy with three primary goals:

### ♦ **Agricultural Productivity**

Working with the West Africa Seed Alliance (WASA), the African Seed Trade Association, and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, USAID has expanded access to high quality seed varieties for thousands of farmers. Improved irrigation methods are also being introduced throughout the region.

### ♦ **Agricultural Trade and Transport Barriers**

In an attempt to increase the value and volume of inter-regional exports, specifically of onions, maize,

and livestock, Agribusiness Trade Promotion (ATP) has been carrying out value chain assessments and holding meetings with buyers and sellers.

To reduce transport costs and increase efficiency, ATP has been replacing the system of loading and unloading of trucks at checkpoints. They are also working with the West African Monetary and Economic Union (WAEMU) to collect data from truckers on road barriers, bribes paid, and delays along major trade routes.

### ♦ **Sound Market-Based Principles for Agriculture**

USAID is working with leading regional organizations such as the Inter State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and WAEMU to create a policy and regulatory environment that will attract increased private sector investment into agricultural input and output markets in



*Produce trucks stopped at the Niger-Burkina Faso border. The USAID funded Agribusiness Trade Promotion (ATP) project is aimed at preventing such inefficiencies in regional agri-*

West Africa. For example, ATP and WAEMU have been working to identify and eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers to regional trade in food staples.

Additionally, under another Presidential Initiative, the Africa Global Competitiveness Initiative, the West Africa Trade Hub is facilitating enactment and implementation of ECOWAS's Common External Tariff and internal Free Trade Area.



## GHFSI– Recent Developments

At the 2009 World Food Prize Announcement Ceremony on June 11, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced that the “issue of chronic hunger and food security is at the top of the agenda that we’re pursuing in the State Department and in the Obama Administration.”

The strategy that will be pursued is one of a transition from sending emergency aid to creating a sustainable agricultural system through the application of seven principles that include expanding access to quality inputs, supporting policy

reform and good governance, and empowering women.

More recently, President Obama at the G8 Summit in L’Aquila, Italy proposed a \$15 billion commitment by the G8 countries including \$3.5 billion from the United States. The money will be used for agricultural inputs and research and will enable the Agriculture Office of USAID West Africa to continue with the successful work they are doing with its’ partners.

### EMERGING REGIONAL GRAIN TRADERS: ROLE OF AGRIBUSINESS AND TRADE PROMOTION PROGRAM

When Ms. Elorm Goh graduated with a degree in sociology from the University of Ghana in 2006, she did not expect to look for a job in the agriculture sector, particularly as a regional trader. However, her frequent trips to Accra’s Agbob-



loshie market piqued her interest in the sector, and she

*“When I tell my friends that I buy and sell maize, they become surprised and think that a graduate should not do that. But I think that the industry has the potential to expand and create value for its players”* - Ms. Elorm Goh

soon joined the Ghana Agricultural Producers and Traders Organization (GAPTO) in hopes of starting her own business.

Goh is one example of emerging regional traders in West Africa. In November 2008, she attended the Maize Value Chain Assessment Workshop in Accra as a representative of GAPTO. Maize is an important staple food crop in West Africa and is traded widely in the region.

The workshop was organized by the USAID/ WA funded Agribusiness and Trade Promotion

(ATP) program, which aims to increase trade in onions, ruminant livestock, and maize throughout West Africa. The ATP Workshop brought together over 50 producers, traders and governmental officials from Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Mali, and Niger to discuss problems related to increasing trade in maize. Producers, traders and exporters shared experiences and established contacts with each other to expand maize trade in the region.

Following the workshop, Goh visited Techiman and Ejura in Ghana’s maize-producing zone, and Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), a net importer of Ghanaian maize. She established business linkages with producers and marketing agents and developed good working relationships with extension agents around Techiman and Ejura.

Goh has already supplied 750 metric tons of maize with a value of US \$225,000 to a maize processing company in Burkina Faso. Determined to establish herself as a key player in the regional market, she has secured a warehouse in Abissi in Ghana’s maize-producing zone, and set up an office in Accra in anticipation of supplying at least 1,500 metric tons to regional buyers by the end of 2009.

## USAID BUILDS CAPACITY IN BIO-SECURITY

USAID/WA has spearheaded regional efforts to prevent H5N1 (Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza or HPAI) infections in humans with the overall goal of preventing an HPAI pandemic and reducing mortality through adequate prevention.

The West and Central Africa regions presented a number of challenges towards achieving these goals. One of them was a lack of capacity to identify and respond to outbreaks due to inadequacies in data and disease-related information, in preparation, in public education and crisis communication, and in laboratory surveillance systems. Other challenges included: inoperative country response plans, insufficient coordination, low involvement of the private sector, as well as insufficient bio-security in the poultry and health sectors.

Since 2006, USAID has worked with a variety



*Compensation is being paid by Togo's authorities to farmers for culled birds, a pre-requisite for farmers' reporting, collaboration, and for effective outbreak containment*

of partners and funded more than \$30 million in activities designed to address these challenges, resulting in a number of important successes.

Most significantly, all HPAI outbreaks in West Africa have been contained and controlled, ensuring minimal impact on public health, food security, and human livelihoods. As a result human infection and a large death toll have been avoided.

West African regional expertise and capacity have been strengthened as well, and a new culture



*Outbreak investigation team from Togo Veterinary Services, fully protected, collecting samples from sick and dead chickens in the index farm in Sigbehoue District*

of bio-security and cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination has emerged.

Another success is that HPAI risk-mapping exercises have resulted in more targeted HPAI surveillance in Benin, Togo, Burkina Faso, and Ghana, and regional laboratory.

Epidemiology-surveillance centers have been established, enabling greater intra-regional technical assistance and more timely disease diagnostics.

Stockpile supply management skills have also been developed.

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## Bio Security *from page 5*

Veterinary and Public Health professionals are now working together to investigate and control major zoonotic diseases.

Improved communication tools and engagement of the private sector have led to a change of mentality and better bio-security practices amongst public health professionals and the poultry sector, resulting in prompt reporting and prevention of rumors and panic.

Our work, however, is ongoing.

To build upon these successes, our future goals will include the protection of public health by ensuring sustainable capacity to effectively control outbreaks via greater veterinary and medical practice integration, the enhancement of food security and sustainable livelihoods through the creation of animal and livestock value chains and finally, greater public-private partnership.

## RECENT NEWS: USAID HEALTH TEAM LAUNCHES AWARE II

The follow up flagship project to Action for West Africa (AWARE) II has been awarded to Management Sciences for Health. AWARE- is a regional project that covers 21 countries including 16 countries in West Africa (the 15 ECOWAS countries plus Mauritania) and five other countries in Central Africa.

AWARE I was a five year grant (2003-2008) funded by USAID through the West Africa Regional Program (WARP). AWARE I had two focus areas - AWARE- HIV/AIDS and AWARE-RH (Reproductive Health).

AWARE I focused on promoting health sector reform, building the capacity of regional networks and institutions, including the West Africa Health Organization (WAHO), fostering regional technical leadership, improving collaboration among partners in the health sector, and managing the West African Ambassadors' Fund for AIDS.

AWARE I also aimed at identifying, modeling and replicating best practices in the areas of HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Health. These included programs that provide preventive services to HIV+ pregnant women to protect their newborns from becoming infected. Also HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment services were established

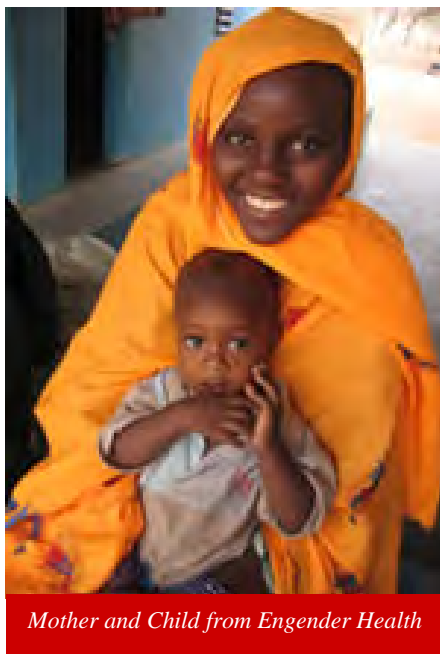
at 60 cross-border locations to service truckers and sex workers of the major transport routes that are hot spots for the spread of HIV/AIDS.

AWARE II is aimed at building upon the successes of AWARE I and will work to improve the

enabling policy environment for sustainable progress in the health sector. One example of this is that AWARE I was instrumental in developing a model law protecting the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS. Their advocacy resulted in the law being adopted by 11 countries in West Africa, to protect the human rights of people with HIV/AIDS. AWARE II will be looking at how well the law is being implemented and if there are further impediments to human rights in this area.

Additionally, AWARE II will focus on institutional capacity building for the adoption and implementation of policies that improve health status and services; the replication and

dissemination of best practices in health; strengthening West African technical leading institutions and networks to provide technical assistance to countries; and leveraging new funding and ensuring effective use of current funding for health sector activities and services.



*Mother and Child from Engender Health*

PHOTO BY CARRIE SVINGEN

## SHEA – BETTER LIVES FOR RURAL FAMILIES

Despite its common use in the confectionary and cosmetic products, the Shea nut remains relatively unknown outside of West Africa.

The USAID West Africa Trade Hub is determined to boost the visibility and demand for Shea globally, while simultaneously assisting local producers, traders, and processors capture more of the crop's value before exporting it abroad.

Shea is a traditional African tree crop that occurs in 20 countries in the semi-arid to dry-land zones of western sub-Saharan Africa. Rural women collect



*Mame Diene of BioEssence at the International Cosmetic Chemists Suppliers' Day*

### Did You Know???

In the hot Sahara, Shea butter has a life-preserving function. For centuries the people there have used it to protect their skin from the drying wind.

the opening of the 3F's (Foods, Fats, and fertilizers Ltd.) 20,000 ton extraction plant in Tema, Ghana.

The Trade Hub has worked closely with 3F linking the business venture with regional traders and producers. The new plant brings the total Ghana Shea crushing capacity to an estimated 70,000 tons, well exceeding the estimated total annual harvest of 50,000 tons. The new factory is therefore expected to source nuts regionally.

Throughout West Africa this past year, 43 companies generated \$8.3 million in exports and 241 new direct jobs. Some 80,000 women in rural village cooperatives picked and performed initial processing of the Shea butter.

and trade Shea nuts generating income while enhancing the food security of rural communities.

The global demand for Shea is rapidly growing in the confectionary industry where it is used as a substitute for cocoa butter and in the cosmetic industry where it is used in soaps and moisturizing creams.

In the last 10 years, export volumes of Shea have increased by over 600% and prior to the global financial crisis the price of Shea had risen significantly over the same period.

Recently the industry has encountered several challenges including a drop in the price of Shea, erratic rainfall, and a rather poor harvest regionally.

Despite these obstacles, the West Africa Shea industry began its harvest season on a high point with

### Did You Know???

The African Butter tree was given its common name, Shea tree, at the end of the 18th century in honor of the Scottish explorer Mungo Park.



## REDUCED OVERLOADING MAY RAISE COSTS IN SHORT TERM

Recently at the border between Niger and Burkina Faso, trucks were parked for hours, if not days, when new restrictions were imposed on the weight of freight they were allowed to carry.

Agents of Niger's Caisse Autonome de Financement et de l'Entretien Routier (CAFER) stopped at least 500 overloaded trucks at the Niger border from January to April 2009. Drivers in some cases bribed their way across the border. Others were forced to offload part of their cargo onto other vehicles.

It now appears these restrictions will be maintained. Prices for freight have risen accordingly, according to Yaya Yedan of Bollore, a leading transport company.

The principal immediate beneficiaries will likely be roadway surfaces, public safety, and

national treasuries. Overloaded freight vehicles dramatically shorten the life expectancy of newly paved roads, which governments must then pay to reconstruct. Overloaded trucks are also implicated in the most horrific highway accidents.

The USAID/West Africa Trade Hub's principal mission is to facilitate greater exports, and one might think that a good way to do this is by reducing the cost of freight. If lower cost freight comes at the cost of public safety and more frequent road reconstruction, then that cost may be too high. The Trade Hub's hope is that on balance, safer trucks travel-

ing over better roads will eventually prove best for everyone. Their advice to governments is to introduce weight restrictions gradually, giving the market more time to adjust.



*Produce Truck Stopped Along Road in Niger*

## CRACKING THE CREDIT CRUNCH

"Trade Finance 2009," a forum recently held in Dakar, brought businesses, bankers and investors to the table to seek solutions to the serious problem of finance in West Africa. Even the very best exporters in West Africa feel they are underserved by banks and investment funds. Interest rates higher than 30% on trade finance are not unusual, even when partial credit guarantees are provided by donors.

West African small and medium enterprises sometimes overcome this problem by asking their buyers in the USA and elsewhere to finance transactions. When an order is placed, the buyer is asked to make partial payment, which is then used by the manufacturer to buy materials, hire labor, and ship the product.



*Caroline Kendem, CEO of apparel manufacturer Ken Atlantic in Douala, Cameroon*

While this is acceptable to some buyers, they are quick to point out that West Africa's competitors in China, India, and elsewhere do not require them to prepay. This puts West Africa at a disadvantage.

The longer term solution is a more sophisticated financial market, where specialized lending organizations (which may or may not be banks) develop specific products to suit the needs of exporters. At the forum in Dakar, a number of private investment fund managers expressed an interest in this idea.

The USAID/West Africa Trade Hub is hosting visits by fund managers to explore options, but recognizes that credit will persist as a serious constraint to trade.



## PEACE THROUGH DEVELOPMENT (PDEV) PROMOTES YOUTH

For a select group of youth in Niamey, engaging in social research became a reality. Peace Through Development (PDEV) began its initial Community Youth Mapping (CYM) exercises



PHOTO COURTESY OF AED

*PDEV sponsored community reporters'*

with them in December 2008. For several young people, the research eventually led to employment.

The USAID/PDEV project targets at-risk youth in Mauritania, Niger, and Chad in an at-

tempt to integrate them into and make them active players in their communities.

The CYM process is a participatory, youth-centred approach to gathering community-level data, enabling the researchers called "YouthMappers," to understand and address their own communities' problems. The CYM process is the first step toward achieving PDEV's primary goal of youth empowerment.

The Nigérien YouthMappers consisted of a group of young people averaging about 25 years of age. In April 2009, this group attended a study tour of CYM YouthMappers in Egypt, hosted by PDEV.

With the newly acquired tools and experiences, the five Nigérien YouthMappers returned home to Niamey and decided to create their own youth development NGO.

Due to their enthusiasm these five found work through PDEV, via the Media/Outreach component of the project. One of the participants became a part-time community reporter for PDEV and the other four became involved as radio program producers.

## CONFLICT PREVENTION GAINS GROUND IN COTE D'IVOIRE

Search for Common Ground (SFCG) works to transform the way the world deals with conflict - away from adversarial approaches and towards collaborative problem solving.

SFCG is completing an 18-month project in Cote d'Ivoire with the goal of facilitating reconciliation between divided ethnic and religious groups in targeted areas in Côte d'Ivoire.

The goal of the project is to reinforce the knowledge, skills, and confidence of key community leaders in conflict management, reconciliation and peace building and facilitate opportunities for dialogue, reconciliation, and learning at the community and regional levels.



PHOTO BY EDWARD SOTIR-YARIGA

*Community-level Front Line Peace Builders from SFCG in Cote D'Ivoire*

## USAID RENEWS ITS SUPPORT TO THE ECOWAS EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

Early Warning and Response Design Support (EWARDs) is a two-year \$4.5 million project funded by USAID/WA. Its purpose is to assist and enable West Africans to link warning signals to targeted responses at local, national and sub regional levels. The overall goal is to reduce and manage conflict.

Associates in Rural Development, Inc. (ARD, Inc), along with the University of Maryland's Center for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM), and Virtual Research Associates (VRA) implement the project.

ECOWAS and the West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP) are both partners and beneficiaries of the assistance.

The project has three intermediate objectives. The first aims to refine and consolidate ECOWAS' early warning system and tools known as ECOWARN. The second aims to improve the analytic and forecasting capacity of ECOWARN by adding long-term political, social, economic and security (structural) data to events-based data. The third aims to strengthen response

through the reinforcement of peace networks, mediation, and institutional links between and among states and civil society.

The anticipated results of the program include



*EWARDs Post-Award meeting in Abuja, Nigeria*

a more robust ECOWARN physical infrastructure; a more skilled gathering, reporting and analyzing of structural indicators; a customized, practical and tested conflict assessment framework; and functional response mechanisms at various levels in the sub region.

## YOUTH TO YOUTH

One of the many challenges to peace and security is how the "youth bulge," the disproportionate ratio of young people ages 15-24 to the entire



*Youth in Guinea at an Anti-Government Demonstration*

PHOTO COURTESY OF USAID GUINEA

population, may contribute to destabilization in countries in the West Africa region.

The Peace and Security Team at USAID/WA is conducting research in the ECOWAS countries on this issue. Ibrahima Patrick, the summer intern who spearheaded the initial research, reported that, "the numbers themselves do not threaten the stability of the West Africa region. However, the issue is that these youth are unoccupied and have no way out of poverty."

While prospect for employment may appear dismal for the older sector of the "youth bulge," Patrick stated that "there are solutions in agricultural innovations, the private sector and even entrepreneurship."

In order to realize such solutions, changes are needed which will stabilize and enhance investment policy, governmental institutions and other regulatory bodies in West African countries.

## THE FUTURE OF USAID IN WEST AFRICA: FELIX AWANTANG REFLECTS ON 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

International development can be a daunting field with seemingly overwhelming obstacles. In West Africa, the challenges are particularly great with issues ranging from water and food security to child labor, war, and conflict. Felix Awantang, Deputy Regional Mission Director of USAID/ WA, who recently departed from the mission, reflected on his efforts to bring about development on the African continent over the past 25 years and discusses his hopes for the future of the West Africa region.

For some, the path to a development career is a choice, but for Awantang his path to USAID grew out of his own personal obligation. He explained, "I was born in Cameroon and I grew up in an environment where it

was assumed that we had a responsibility to raise the standard of living to that of people living in the West."

In a career that began with a health focus, Awantang has now been exposed to a variety of development issues and provided insight into some of what he believes were major successes and challenges he faced.

When asked to describe his most memorable experience with USAID, Awantang mentally searched through his years spent at the Agency and quickly arrived at a pivotal moment in his development work. He recalled, "My most memorable

experience working with USAID has to do with realizing how vulnerable some populations in the West Africa region truly are."

I recall that in the early 1980's we conducted a nutrition survey in Niger to determine levels of malnourishment." Food security, a pressing issue, is intertwined with education, health and conflict as

agriculture is the economic and social backbone of lesser developed countries.

Awantang continued, "When we awoke one morning there had been a sandstorm. We went to the village; the millet was buried in sand. They had to figure out where the plants were underneath the sand and determine if they were still usable.

There I saw the implications of crop failure and what it can mean

for malnutrition. It was a little frightening to see how vulnerable they were to climatic events."

The implications of droughts and other natural disasters for agriculture and food security have been exacerbated by climate change. For the West Africa region, the results can be catastrophic – enhancing the existing problem of world hunger. For Mr. Awantang the sight of the storms' devastation was more real than ever.

"Malnutrition took a more significant place in my mind. What we were doing was critical.

Having access to inputs to improve agriculture was critical. Within months the whole village could



*Outgoing Deputy Mission Director Felix Awantang*

PHOTO BY MICHELE WELLS

*"It's the people and the organizations that we leave behind that create sustainable development."*

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be starving from one event. The significance of that sandstorm has left a strong impression on me,” he stated. Mr. Awantang’s survey was intended to document malnutrition yet, ironically, he witnessed the beginning of a food shortage.

On the subject of successes, Mr. Awantang explained about a particularly important accomplishment for USAID and the West African Health Organization (WAHO). He stated, “We have done a great deal of capacity-building with regard to the WAHO. I recall when I arrived to visit WAHO in 200 it had just designated its first director, a physi-

***“What we were doing was critical. Within months the whole village could be starving from one event. The significance of that sandstorm has left a strong impression on me.”***

cian from the Gambia, and its deputy director, a physician from Mali. One was English speaking and the other French speaking.

He continued, “They had only four administrative staff and this is how it began from language barriers, political divides and they were to tackle health problems from HIV to Malaria. Now we have an organization with 40 people, working together despite all of these initial barriers. This is an accomplishment of which I feel proud.”

Health concerns remain at the center of development matters and the retiring Deputy Mission Director argued that in order to maintain organizations that create long-lasting change capacity must be built. He explained, “WAHO represents for me an organization that USAID has worked to build up. You know, when we decided to support WAHO no donor would do it. But we felt the concept was le-

gitimate and made sense. For me building capacity is the most important thing we can do for an existing organization. It’s the people and the organizations that we leave behind that create sustainable development.”

With successes come challenges for an organization on the level of USAID. Awantang pointed out that, “you have to really work hard to make sure US government policies are respected, implemented and that development is taking place in the way it was intended. The funding that comes doesn’t necessarily fit the project but you have to also try to help the partner.”

With the many problems faced by development workers it is difficult, at times, to know where to begin tackling intertwined issues.

Awantang believes education is the foundation for all other development issues. He explained, “It’s just that simple. My background is in health, but in the end if people can’t read and write, they are blind to an extent. Education is essential for maintaining democracy and for any form of political governance.”

He also addressed a question on what kind of person might involve him or herself in the development field. “If you get inspired and you get your adrena-

***“If you get inspired and you get your adrenaline going by thinking about what you can do for others you’re in the right place.”***

line going by thinking about what you can do for others you’re in the right place. We are all trying to make a better life for other people,” Awantang stated.

He concluded, “Once you get people with the right intentions to work together it’s a formidable force of change – the biggest you can know.”

**A Special Thank You  
to the Summer Interns who worked  
on this Newsletter**